



Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

Daniel R. Ebert, Chairperson
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For Immediate Release – October 21, 2005

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Public Hearings Scheduled for Xcel Energy Rate Increase

MADISON – The Public Service Commission (PSC) will hold public hearings on November 2, 2005, in Madison, Eau Claire and LaCrosse on a request to increase electric and natural gas service rates from Northern States Power Company, a Wisconsin corporation, d/b/a Xcel Energy.

Xcel Energy has requested to increase electric rates by approximately 14% and natural gas service by nearly 5%. When a utility requests a change in rates, the PSC conducts a thorough audit of the utility's forecasted expenses and revenues. The agency will look at the amount Xcel Energy needs to provide a reliable source of energy to customers, which includes costs for maintenance, new construction, environmental protection, fuel and employee wages.

Public testimony is considered by the Commission when it determines the amount of money the utility needs to prudently provide reliable utility service and sets new rates for the utility.

Citizens are invited to attend the public hearings and provide testimony on Xcel Energy's rate request. All testimony will be included in the record which the Commission will review as it prepares to make a decision. The PSC also accepts written comments at the public hearings, through mail or electronically through the website at: <http://psc.wi.gov/> until November 2, 2005. The hearings are set to begin:

**Wednesday, November 2nd
1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.**

**Public Service Commission
Amnicon Falls Hearing Room, 1st floor
610 N. Whitney Way
Madison, WI**

**Chippewa Valley Technical College
Gateway Campus, Room 130
2320 Alpine Road
Eau Claire, WI**

**UW-LaCrosse
102 Wing Technology Center
1725 State Street
LaCrosse, WI**

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The hearing locations are accessible to people with wheelchairs. Any person with a disability who needs additional accommodations to participate in this proceeding should contact Candice Spanjar at 608-267-9537.

The PSC, today, opened a proceeding in a separate interim fuel case filed by Xcel Energy. The electric and natural gas rate increase request and interim fuel case will be handled separately. Interim fuel cases are intended for utilities to recover fuel costs that have gone outside the predetermined range, such as increased costs after natural disasters. In their interim fuel rate request, Xcel Energy has asked for nearly \$9 million to recuperate increased costs of fuel to produce electricity after hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The PSC will hold separate public hearings, accept public comments and will conduct a full audit to determine if the request is reasonable.

Documents associated with Xcel Energy's two applications, can be viewed on the PSC's Electronic Repository System at <http://psc.wi.gov/>. Click on ERF System, select Search Electronic Repository System and enter dockets 4220-UR-114 and 4220-UR-113.

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